



## DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

Division of Family Development  
P.O. Box 716  
TRENTON, NEW JERSEY 08625

Chris Christie  
*Governor*

Kim Guadagno  
*Lt. Governor*

Elizabeth Connolly  
*Acting Commissioner*

Natasha Johnson  
*Director*  
Tel. (609) 588-2400

The following Decision is distributed for your information. This Decision has been made in consideration of the specific facts of this case. This Decision is not to be interpreted as establishing any new mandatory policy or procedure otherwise officially promulgated.

STATE OF NEW JERSEY  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

### FINAL DECISION

OAL DKT. NO. HPW 4929-15 J.T.

AGENCY DKT. NO. GA586712 (ESSEX COUNTY DIVISION OF WELFARE)

Petitioner appeals from Respondent Agency's denial of Work First New Jersey/General Assistance ("WFNJ/GA") benefits. The Agency denied Petitioner WFNJ/GA benefits because she, purportedly, failed to comply with her WFNJ 28-day work activity. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. On May 29, 2015, the Honorable Jesse H. Strauss, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents. On May 29, 2015, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, which reversed the Agency's action.

No exceptions to the Initial Decision were received.

As the Director of the Division of Family Development, Department of Human Services, I have reviewed the ALJ's Initial Decision and the record, and I ADOPT the ALJ's Initial Decision and REVERSE the Agency's determination.

Here, Petitioner applied for WFNJ/GA benefits on February 26, 2015 and completed her WFNJ 28-day work requirement on March 31, 2015. See Initial Decision at 2. Within four business days from the date of completion of her work activity, April 6, 2015, Petitioner provided the Agency with documentation showing completion of her required work activity, as evidenced by a receipt of that date from the Agency. *Ibid.* Accordingly, the ALJ found that Petitioner completed her required work activity in a timely manner, provided the Agency with the substantiating documentation, and, therefore, the Agency improperly denied Petitioner WFNJ/GA benefits for failure to complete her WFNJ/GA 28-day work requirement. *Id.* at 3.

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Additionally, I concur with the ALJ, and find that it appears from the record that the Agency may have prematurely denied Petitioner WFNJ/GA benefits. While, it is anticipated that the Agency will process a WFNJ/GA application within 30 days, see N.J.A.C. 10:90-1.5(a), it may not always be practicable with the WFNJ/GA applicant who needs to complete a 28-day work requirement, when the completion date of that requirement may very well depend on the date on which the applicant is scheduled to begin the work activity, taking into account weekends, and when the substantiating documentation of completion can reasonably be provided to the Agency by the applicant. Here, the Petitioner provided such documentation within 4 business days, which I find reasonable. See Initial Decision at 2.

Accordingly, the Initial Decision is ADOPTED and the Agency's action is REVERSED.

**JUN 22 2015**

*Signed Copy on File*  
at DFD, BARA

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Natasha Johnson  
Director